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## **Power-sharing or Ethnic Domination? Ethnic Representation in the Republics of Russia in the Late 2000s - Early 2010s**

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### **Abstract**

The paper explores political representation of the major ethnic groups in the republics of Russia, in order to elucidate the role of ethnicity in regional politics under an authoritarian turn in the late 2000s - early 2010s. To assess quantitative data, the study develops a model to analyse patterns of ethnic representation. The data analysis demonstrates that, at least in some republics, ethnicity was among the major principles in power distribution and regional regimes seem to have relied in managing diversity largely on either ethnic domination or on regional power-sharing. Based on a structural approach, the structural factors that contributed to these outcomes are analysed, taking into account a range of variables that characterize the ethnic situations of the republics and their political regimes. The findings of this study point at the persistence of ethnic representation as a practice in the formation of the republics' officialdoms under the authoritarian regime.

**Keywords:** ethnic representation; power-sharing; ethnic domination; ethnic republics; Russian Federation

Following the parade of sovereignties, 21 republics, 10 autonomous districts and an autonomous region were established as forms of territorial self-governance of their 'titular

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nation(alitie)s' alongside regular ('non-ethnic') federation units in the early 1990s (Zamyatin, 2016: 25-27). 'Titular' ethnic elites became dominant in the leadership of many republics. The recentralization of the 2000s reduced the republics' autonomy and by the 2010s resulted in the demise of federalism. Did 'titular' elites still remain dominant in the republics? To shed light on the access of elites to power in ethnic republics of Russia in the late 2000s – early 2010s, this study aims at quantitatively assessing the level of ethnic representation in the republics' top officialdom.

The period of the late 2000s – early 2010s is interesting for study, because substitution of the last Yeltsin-era heavy-weight heads of republics with the new ones in 2010 had its impact also on power distribution in republics without significantly disturbing the equilibrium in ethnic representation. Since autumn 2015, several heads of republics were arrested during the anticorruption campaign or otherwise sacked and substituted for 'outsiders', which might have marked a new era in regional ethnopolitics, when the role of ethnicity as a consideration in appointments diminished. In this study, the ruling groups that are under exploration are those that occupied formal positions in the 2007/2011-2011/2015 electoral cycle: the precise years vary among the republics.

What patterns of ethnic representation emerged in the republics? In the first part, the paper will present the data of a comparative study of ethnic representation across republics. Hanna Pitkin identified among the dimensions of political representation descriptive and substantive representation (Pitkin, 1967). This study assesses ethnic representation operationalized as a 'descriptive representation', when the ethnic identity of public officials and politicians is taken as an indicator of representation that substitutes their standing for the group interests. The assessment of substantial representation, when the representatives also act in relation to particular interests of an ethnic group, is not taken in the scope of this study, *inter alia*, because the analysis does not focus on the outcomes of the political process, such as passing legislation on ethnic issues.

In focus of the analysis is the contrast between the shares of the titular and the Russian populations and their representation in the parliaments and governments of the republics. I will use the combination of positional and biographical approaches of the elite theory to study the information on ethnic background of elected deputies and government officials attainable in open sources and available expert reports. An unavoidable shortcoming of the option of studying descriptive representation is that only a probabilistic argument can be made, because the representatives may act only out of their own interests, as portrayed in instrumentalist

accounts. Further, given the context-specific character of ethnic allegiances, there is a danger of essentializing ethnicity by overstating the deepness of ethnic cleavages and divisions among the elites and in the populations.

For many ethnic groups in Russia, social cohesion is enhanced by the processes of assimilation that make ethnic identities less salient and the issue of ethnic representation less relevant. Ethnic issues were central to the political agenda only in some republics and often only at the time of major events, such as the adoption of their constitutions, but also then ethnic elites rarely acted as a consolidated force. More often, regional elites competed and reached a coalition of the second-order sub-elite groups or even ‘clans’, where ethnicity was one among the binding principles (Salagaev and Sergeev, 2013). Usually the divide between ‘titular’ and ‘Russian’ segments of regional elites had less political salience than their belonging to the ‘party of power’ united under the regional leader. In this study, the different segments of regional political elites that acted as ‘representatives of their people’, proposing their solutions to ethnic and linguistic issues at the time of critical junctures, are conventionally referred to, accordingly, as ‘titular elites’ vs ‘Russian (regional) elites’ (Zamyatin, 2015: 352).

The study will develop a model to systematize and analyse the patterns of representation and hypothesize about the state of ethnic relations in individual republics that these data reveal. Throughout the post-Soviet period, Russia pursued a combination of approaches to diversity management, but since the 2010s there was a clear shift in the predominant strategy from accommodation to integration and assimilation (Zamyatin, 2016: 43-44). Ethnic republics themselves are the pillar of the accommodationist approach. Russia’s federal design significantly restricted their jurisdiction to manage diversity through the creation of the political institutions based on ethnicity, but up to the 2010s the Kremlin rarely interfered directly into regional ethnic politics.

Thus, the republics settled the issue of ethnic representation at the level of informal practices, which makes categorization difficult. In Russian public discourse, the phenomena of varying ‘regional approaches to diversity management’ remains unnamed. Many elite members themselves continue to share essentialist beliefs about ethnic identities that are implicit in the vocabulary of political discourse. As part of the nationalist rhetoric, some politicians characterized the overrepresentation of the titular elites in republics as ‘ethnocracy’. This concept is ideologically charged and faulty in semantics: the substitution of ‘demos’ with ‘ethnos’ does not work, because of the central role of elites in regional politics.

I will hypothesize about regional approaches based only on the analysis of the quantitative data and will not qualitatively substantiate the conceptualization, which remains a matter for further research. I will not invent new categories but, instead, will employ with some qualifications the existing terms like ‘minority inclusion’, ‘power-sharing’ or ‘domination’ for designating the approaches not as normative but only as *descriptive categories* (for a similar classification of forms of minority representation see Bieber, 2010).

Power-sharing and domination are the opposite approaches, while inclusion is a category to depict in-between cases. This, however, does not necessarily imply that the first is a democratic and the second an authoritarian approach. The most famous form of power-sharing that was proposed as a democratic strategy of conflict resolution in an ethnically divided society is consociationalism developed by Arend Lijphart (1977). However, authoritarian regimes also rely on power-sharing to ensure their stability. Similarly, domination is pursued both under the democratic and authoritarian rule (McGarry, 2010: 37). Further, the approaches have both a vertical dimension in the context of the centre-periphery relations and a horizontal dimension in regional politics. I will only study the horizontal non-institutionalized arrangements in republics that amounted to domination or tacit agreements that envisaged regional executive power-sharing (O’Leary, 2008; Bieber, 2010).

Why might certain patterns of ethnic representation have emerged? From the constructivist perspective, ‘instrumentalist’ thinkers see interests and human agency as the driving force of identity construction, and ‘institutionalists’ argue that the social structures create identities. Arguably, the agency factors are more characteristic of the Russian ethno-politics in the periods of the 1990s and 2000s, when the role of ethnic mobilization and ‘ethnic entrepreneurship’ was decreasing with the progress of the state-building from its stages of sovereignization and decentralization to recentralization, while the establishment of superpresidentialism also in the republics conditioned their specific of party politics and ethnic voting, intra-elite competition and network effects. Thus, structural factors are crucial for study of regional ethno-politics in the period of the late 2000s – early 2010s.

Hence, in the second part, the paper will analyse the data patterns based on the cleavage structure theory that seeks to explain political outcomes by the character of identity divisions in society, whether the population is divided into complementary or cross-cut identity groups. Cross-cutting cleavages are said to enhance social cohesion and reinforcing cleavages contributes to the political salience of ethnic identities, producing more segmented societies (Lijphart, 1977; Horowitz, 1985). The study will explore how the levels of ethnic representation

depended on some structural variables that characterize the ethnic situations of the republics and their political regimes. A low level of political competition largely contributed to domination, and a higher competition contributed to power-sharing.

## **1. Ethnicity and representation**

### ***1.1 Approaches and difficulties in studying representation***

In the early 2000s, the Kremlin started ‘federal reforms’ that aimed at the recentralization of the state through building the ‘vertical of power’ and resulted in a decline of federalism in Russia. The ‘institutionalist’ understanding that the existence of ‘ethnic institutions’, such as the republics themselves, reinforces alternative ethno-national identities justified the accompanying nation-building efforts. The depoliticization of ethnicity and its removal from the public domain included the abolishment or at least deformatization of the professional requirements of language knowledge and other ethnic institutions (Zamyatin, 2016: 36-38). While indication of one’s ethnic self-identification was preserved in the population censuses, the practice of official monitoring of the data on ethnic identity in virtually all other public contexts was stopped. Nevertheless, as will be shown below, the relevance of ethnicity in the political context persists, although it varies from one republic to another. By definition, a blind spot of the institutionalist approach in studying ethnic phenomena is that it does not provide tools to explore informal practices in ‘cadre policy’.

How is it still possible to study the ethnicity of members of the ruling groups? In general, the data on the ethnic background of the first figures in the regions is typically publicly known. So is the data on ethnicity of the second, third and fourth positions of government head, chairman of legislature and mayor of the capital city. In part of executive officials and civil servants, the data on ethnic representation in individual republics and other regions is often collected by the authorities, but rarely disclosed, because, especially since the 2000s, it is viewed as politically sensitive and potentially inhibiting for ‘inter-ethnic accord’. When accessible, practically no sources give a systematic set of data that could be used for comparisons across regions. The compilation of the dataset is the practical task of the current study.

A further complication is that the 1990s were characterized by a frequent change of regional leadership, with the exception of some heads of the republics in power for over two decades until mid-2000s up to 2010. At the lower stories of the apparatus, regular change of

deputies after serving their terms and the rotation of government officials, especially among the ministers, was also typical. It would be possible to produce a meaningful set of data for any given moment but not a dynamic picture which would be patchy by the lack of similarity in data. It makes more sense to go beyond everyday politics and give a snapshot of the recent situation and then to interpret the patterns from a long-time perspective.

Similarly, representation assessed solely by one's formal position in the institutional structure incompletely stands for one's political clout, because the importance of informal power networks grew over time behind the façade of institutions. Nevertheless, this is a sufficient indicator for the purpose of this study which is based on the assumption that ethnic segments of elites were similarly represented in formal and informal networks.

The distinction between formal and informal ethnic representation is meaningful also because typically domination was camouflaged by the appointment of at least some minority representatives to formal positions to emphasize the political representativeness and responsiveness of the ruling groups even if in reality domination was sustained, often through informal channels. At the same time, informal networks could enhance ethnic representation because these included trusted persons from one's earlier career stages. For example, for titular representatives these were often rural career paths. This study did not take the task of following this distinction because some fluctuation in representation creates noise in the data but does not disrupt the patterns that tended to be at the margins of the scale ending either in domination or power-sharing. A more nuanced approach to reveal the layers of formal and informal ethnic representation remains a topic for further research.

### ***1.2 Methods and focus groups***

One method that provides a shortcut for a first approximation of ethnic representation in an authoritarian situation is to focus on studying the ethnic background of the chief executives. However, the balanced appointment practice was often preserved also under the strong presidencies at the lower stories of the state apparatus. Thus, another method is to identify the ethnic background of members of the ruling groups, including regional parliamentarians, heads of regional executive authorities, and sometimes also heads of municipalities. While parliamentarians are usually under public scrutiny, less available in open sources is the data on ethnicity of the other two categories of public officials.

A further complication regarding heads of executive authorities and agencies is whether one should focus exclusively on the study of the ethnic background of the prime-minister and ministers or also on deputy prime-ministers and deputy ministers as well as heads of governmental agencies. A wider focus would make sense, because the latter categories qualify as 'leading officials' and, thus, members of the ruling groups. When forming the regional government and ministries, the principle of proportional representation of the major groups is often observed along other considerations. For example, posts of minister and first deputy minister would be shared between individuals representing the largest groups. Another advantage of a wider focus is that this way the cluster of the executive branch would be roughly of the same size as that for the legislature, which, according to the 2010 federal law, had to be standardized across the regions in the following electoral cycle. Thus, a wider focus would have made comparisons more consistent.

However, deputy prime-ministers and deputy ministers are a much less public group and their ethnic background is often not disclosed, which makes a cross-regional study near to impossible. In addition, the cabinet as a collected body includes only heads of executive authorities. Heads of executive authorities and their deputies do not have equal standing, and in some places the ethnic background of the heads of authorities might be a sufficient indicator representing the lower stories, also because in some contexts s/he might hire a team consisting of co-ethnics. Further, a significant part among the regional government members are heads of branches of the federal authorities, including law-enforcement agencies, where proportionality is far less observed by default due to their rotation from other regions and members of the titular group are typically less represented. The same is valid in regard to the judicial authorities that are in the federal competence and, thus, not in the focus of this study.

A study focus on an ethnic background of municipal elites would have made sense, because this level is the closest to the population and governing bodies tend to resemble its ethnic composition the most. Regional capital cities are typically well-to-do entities and have the bulk of the regional population. For that reason, some sources list head of capital city among the first officials of republics. Titular populations in some republics traditionally reside in rural areas, while the Russians often are in the majority in the capital city. However, the factual subordination of municipalities to regional authorities signified a virtual lack of local self-government. Thus, a mechanic summation of municipal elites with other regional elites misrepresents the overall structure of the ruling groups in these republics.



The second method is suitable for exploring the balance of power both under democratic conditions with its representation of many group interests, and under an authoritarian regime, because the principle of ethnic representation tends to be proliferated from chief executives downwards to the level of heads and deputy heads in the executive branch, and often even among the public servants. In practice, this study produces data on two dozen ministers in some republics and the data on three or four dozen ministers and heads of government agencies (when available, also their deputies) in some other republics. Despite this varying volume, the shares are comparable, because ethnic representation does not presumably differ in ministries and government agencies. Thus, this study uses the combination of the two methods.

### *1.3 Sources and the data on ethnic representation*

The major source of the data are reports of regional experts based on open sources and available from publications of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. A semi-official source (Romanov and Stepanov, 2013) is the closest there is to a systematized set, but the method is not explained, only shares are given and no raw data is presented to cross-check the calculation. The publication lopsidedly tends to underestimate the share of ethnic Russians among the elites, overemphasizing titular overrepresentation, but interprets overrepresentation of the Russian elites as a natural order of things. It is not explicitly stated which segment was included into the ruling group in focus, but one can deduce that these were regional parliamentarians, ministers and heads of municipalities. For example, analysing the data on ethnic background of the ruling group of Tatarstan, three clusters of elites were given and, inter alia, 24% of ethnic Russians were marked among parliamentarians. This is outdated data, as the accurate data on the number of ethnic Russian parliamentarians in Tatarstan for the period should be 32% (Tishkov and Stepanov, 2013b: 87).

The data for the republics of the North Caucasus Federal District originate mostly from Tishkov and Stepanov (2013a), for Chechnya and Ingushetia from Kosikov (2012) and for Kabardin-Balkaria from Tishkov and Stepanov (2010) and Tenov and Atlaskirov (2014). The data on the two republics of the Southern Federal District originate for Adygea after the 2006 elections from Golosov (2012) and Ivanov (2007) and for Kalmykia from Ulinova (2011). Only the data on deputies of the republics of the Volga and North-Western Federal Districts are available for Bashkortostan and Tatarstan from Tishkov and Stepanov (2013b), for Udmurtia from Tishkov and Stepanov (2013c), for Mari El from Zamyatin (2015), for Mordovia from my

analysis based on official data, and only on titular deputies for Komi from Tishkov and Stepanov (2009) and for Karelia from the data officially presented at the 7th Congress of the Karelian People (2013). The data on Chuvashia, Bashkortostan and Tatarstan are discussed in the next section. For the lack of other data, the unreliable aggregated data from Romanov and Stepanov (2013) is used on the share of the ethnic Russians among the ruling groups in Udmurtia, Mari El, Mordovia and Bashkortostan. The available data on the republics of the Far East and Siberian Federal Districts are for Buryatia, Sakha (Yakutia) and Tuva from Ochirova (2011) and for Khakassia and Altay from Ivanov (2007).

The accumulated data set on the numbers of individuals in power positions by their ethnicity is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The numbers of individuals by their ethnicity in the republics' parliaments and governments.

1) North Caucasus	2) total	3) titular	4) Russian	5) 3rd	1) Europe- an part	2)	3)	4)	5)	1) Siberia/ Far East	2)	3)	4)	5)
Adygea 2006/2007	% %	% %	n/a %	- -	Karelia 2011	50 n/a	8 n/a	n/a n/a	- -	Khakassia 2007	% %	% %	% %	- -
Kalmykia 2011	23 20	18 12	4 8	- -	Komi 2007	30 n/a	6 n/a	n/a n/a	- -	Altay 2007	% %	% %	% %	- -
KChR 2009	72 %	37 %	17 %	11 %	Udmurtia 2012	90 %	13 %	67 %	7 -	Buryatia 2007	% %	% %	% %	- -
KBR+ 2009/2012	72 %	39 %	15 %	15 %	Mari El 2009	52 %	15 %	29 %	1 -	Sakha (Y) 2008	% %	% %	% %	- -
N. Ossetia 2009	70 31	61 26	7 4	- -	Mordovia 2007/2009	51 %	11 %	32 %	4 -	Tuva 2006	% %	% %	% %	- -
Dagestan 2010	90 25	27 6	n/a 3	14 4	Bashkorto stan 2008	% 38	% 21	% 12	% 2					
Chechnya 2011	41 30	n/a n/a	2 1	- -	Chuvashia 2011	47 21	35 19	12 2	- -					
Ingushetia 2011	27 18	n/a n/a	1 0	- -	Tatarstan 2009/2010	98 29	67 27	31 2	- -					

Note: 1) In the first column, the republic's title is given together with the first year of the parliament work and the year for the government. In addition, a separate year for the government is given, if noticeably different. The republics are concentrated in three large geographical areas: the Volga-Ural Region and the European North, the North Caucasus and nearby, and Siberia and the Far East, and are grouped accordingly.

2) The data on the total numbers of regional parliamentarians and government members is presented, accordingly, as the first and second digits in the column for each republic. When only relative data on the corresponding shares of titular and Russian elites is available in sources, the field is marked with '%' and the corresponding data is provided in Table 2.

3) The data on the numbers of parliamentarians and government members of the titular ethnic background.

- 4) The respective data on those of the Russian ethnic background.  
 5) The respective data for the third largest group, if applicable.

To what extent is the representation proportional and does any elite group control half or more of the offices? The data on the shares of the largest ethnic groups in power is presented in Table 2 and is counted as a simple average of the shares in two bodies, because the government as a collective body is at least as powerful as the legislature. Many republics have more than two main ethnic groups, sometimes also more than two titular groups. For the purpose of simplicity and availability, the third groups are not in the focus of this study and are discussed only briefly.

Table 2. The shares of the largest ethnic groups in the republics' total population (2010 population census) and the republics' officialdoms.

1) North Caucasus	2)	3)	4)	5)	1) Europe- an part	2)	3)	4)	5)	1) Siberia/ Far East	2)	3)	4)	5)
Adygea +35	25 62	51 44	47 46	56 43	Karelia	7.4 82	n/a	16 n/a	n/a	Khakassia	12 82	10 81	15 79	6 83
Kalmykia +13	57 30	69 29	78 17	60 40	Komi +5	24 65	n/a	20 n/a	n/a	Altay -2	34 57	35 53	35 56	36 50
Karachay- Cherkessia +24	41 32 12	50 25 12	51 23 15	49 27 9	Udmurtia +58	28 62 7	n/a 78	14 74 8	n/a	Buryatia -25	30 66	45 48	46 48	43 47
Kabardin- Balkaria +3	57 23 13	52 20 23	54 21 21	50 19 25	Mari El +48	44 47 6	n/a 68	28 56 2	n/a	Sakha (Yakutia) +16	50 38	58 33	57 35	58 29
North Ossetia +54	65 21	85 11	87 10	84 13	Mordovia -2	40 53 5	n/a 52	22 63 8	n/a	Tuva	82 16	72 23	78 19	66 28
Dagestan 0	29 3.6 17 15 13	27 7.3 16 13 12	30 2.2 16 14 12	24 12 16 12 12	Bashkorto stan +29	30 36 25	50 32	45 32 27	55 32					
Chechnya	95 1.9	n/a 4.3	n/a 5.2	n/a 3.3	Chuvashia +39	68 27	82 16	74 23	91 9					
Ingushetia	94 0.8	n/a 2	n/a 4	n/a 0	Tatarstan +47	53 40	76 23	66 32	86 14					

Note: 1) In the first column, together with the republic's title, the ratio of over- or underrepresentation is given (%) (see the next sections and Table 3 for the calculation method). 2) The shares of the titular and Russian groups in the total population (%) are presented according to the data of the 2010 population census (also the third largest group, if applicable; presented, accordingly, as the first, second and, possibly, third and fourth digits in the column for each republic). Apparently underrated data of Romanov and Stepanov on the ethnic Russians among the elites in the Volga-Urals republics are given *in italics*. Available less

consistent data on other periods for Adygea, Altay, Khakassia and Mordovia are also given *in italics*.

3) The shares of the titular and Russian elites among the ruling groups (%) are calculated as a simple average of their representation in parliaments and governments.

4) The data on parliamentarians (%) are calculated based on the same sources.

5) The data on government members (%) are calculated based on the same sources.

What does the data mean? The data presents a continuum of cases that, nevertheless, can be clustered in certain patterns. If the share of elite segments among the ruling groups is the function of the share of an ethnic group in the total population, then an ethnic group is either overrepresented and, accordingly, another group is underrepresented, or groups enjoy proportional representation.

#### ***1.4 Model for assessment of representation patterns***

How can one convert quantitative relations of representation into power relations for the purpose of interpretation of approaches to diversity management? As these are relations, they should be qualified accordingly and not in absolute terms. A scale is needed to measure against. A model is proposed to qualitatively assess the representation patterns according to the shares of elite segments among the ruling group in relation to the size of the groups they are supposed to represent. This study uses an analytical tool that distinguishes the levels of representation along the scale from 'power-sharing', to 'inclusion', 'domination' and 'exclusion'; transitional cases and third-group cases are discussed separately.

1) In a hypothetical situation with two equally sized ethnic groups in a divided society, a 50%-50% paritarian relation among the members of the ruling groups according to their ethnic background would designate a complete proportional representation of their elites and the groups. A 100%-0% relation would designate a complete exclusion of one group and its elite. In a 75%-25% relation, everything above 75% could be conventionally designated as power-sharing and everything below 25% as exclusion. The interval between 75% and 50% could be designated as inclusion and between 50% and 25% as domination. The numbers in the 75%-25% relation were taken solely for the sake of round numbers, because in reality a higher share than 75% may be required for a situation to qualify as power-sharing and a lower share than 25% for exclusion.

2) In reality, the groups are never equal in size, so the standard scheme should be modified to reflect this fact. The modified model differs in comparison with the standard one outlined above in that the calculations are made based on the actual share of the groups. For example, in

a hypothetical situation when the shares of two groups in the total population relates as 60% and 40%, the larger group would be proportionally represented, if its elite has 60% of all seats, share power having 45-70% (taking up to a quarter of the share of the other group or giving it up to a quarter from the own share in comparison to proportional representation), include with more than 70%, dominate with more than 80%, exclude with more than 90%, be included having under 45%, dominated with less than 30%, and excluded with less than 15% of all seats in each case. Similarly, the smaller group would be represented proportionally, if its elite has about 40% of all seats, share the power having 30-55%, include with more than 55%, dominate with more than 70%, exclude with more than 85%, be included having 20-30%, dominated with less than 20%, and excluded with less than 10%.

The modified model should be applied to the interval of the cases ranging from the one when groups are nearly equal in size to one when one group is up to three times larger than the other. The model should not be applied to the situation when one group is more than three times larger, that is, constitutes an absolute majority of more than 75% of the population in a republic and its share in the ruling group is also more than 75%. This situation should be characterized as domination despite possible inclusion of the minority elite.

3) In reality, there are always third groups, which are likely to ally with larger groups. It cannot be predicted in the model with which of the larger groups they would form coalition. Ukrainians and Belarusians are likely to ally with Russian and other minority groups with the titular groups. In the model, it could be assumed that the common influence of the third groups will be zero because they will nullify each other. Hence, in case the third groups are relatively small in size, representation for the two largest groups can be assessed by applying a modified model as if these were the only groups (calculating them together as 100%). In case a third group is nearly equally sized or is otherwise significant in numbers and (or) in status (for example, is a titular or indigenous group), representation can be assessed in the same way as in the standard model, only for three and more groups. The actual impact of the third group(s) should be then assessed qualitatively in case studies of regions.

4) The application of the model produces a hypothetical assessment that should be qualitatively tested and interpreted. Conventionally, the divergence of up to 25% into the share of the other group is interpreted as indicating the mode of power-sharing, up to 50% inclusion and more than 50% that of domination.

### 1.5 Ethnic representation as an indicator of diversity management

When the model is applied to assess the patterns on representation outlined above, the following matrix on the ratio of over- or underrepresentation of the elites and the corresponding approaches to diversity management in republics appears (see Table 3).

Table 3. Ratio of overrepresentation and the approaches to diversity management.

1) group prevails	2) power-sharing	3) ti-me	4) -25 +25	2) inclusion	3) ti-me	4) +25 +50	2) domination	3) ti-me	4) +50 +75	2) exclusi on
titular elites	KChR	1.3	+24	Tatarstan	1.3	+47	Ingushetia	99		
	Sakha (Y)	1.3	+16	Chuvashia	2.5	+39	Chechnya	48		
	Kalmykia	1.92	+13	Adygea	0.4	+35	Tuva	5.1		
	KBR	.51.	+3	Bashkor-tostan	0.8	+29	North Ossetia	3.1	+54	
	Dagestan	7	0							
Russian elites	Buryatia	2.21	-25				Mari El	1.1	+48	
	Altay	.7	-2				Udmurtia	2.2	+58	
	Mordovia	1.3	-2				Khakassia	6.8		
	Komi	2.7	+5				Karelia	11		

Note: 1) One elite segment prevailed, and depending on whether this is a titular or Russian segment, the case is placed in the according box.

2) Republics are placed in boxes depending on their approaches to diversity management assessed based on ethnic representation. Republics are listed in each box in sequence from the highest to the lowest ratio.

3) The demographic relation of the adjusted sizes between the strongest and second strongest groups in the total population (by times).

4) The ratio is not marked for the republics that are placed in boxes because of the presence of the absolute majority groups (in five and more times). Other republics are placed in boxes according to the ratio of over- or underrepresentation of their elites (%), except for one republic with the ratio at the margin that is, nonetheless, interpreted as domination (Mari El).

The ratio is calculated as a discrepancy between a would-be proportional representation of the strongest ethnic group in the ruling group according to its share in the total population in the republic and the actual share of the elite segment in the ruling group. The shares are compared not based on raw data but adjusted for the two largest groups as if these were the only groups (also for the significant third and fourth group).

For example, the popular shares of the two largest groups in Adygea of 25% and 62% are adjusted for the two groups as 29% and 71% (counted together not as 87% as in reality, but as 100%); similarly, the elite shares of 51% and 44% are adjusted for the two groups as 54% and 46% (counted together not as 95%, but as 100%). The discrepancy between the shares of the stronger group in the population and in the elite amounts to its over- or underrepresentation

and is recalculated in terms of its infringing on a would-be proportional representation of the other group. The ratio is then the relation that depicts the share that the stronger group has taken due to its overrepresentation (in the example, the proportional share of 29% is overrepresented by +25% with actual share of 54%) from a would-be proportional representation of the other group (+25% of 71% is +35% of 100%).

In case calculations are based on incomplete data on the elite representation (estimations *in italics*), the adjusted share of the elite group is calculated based on adjustment of the largest groups as if they were the only groups in the total population, which impairs accuracy of the assessment. Apparently underrated data on the ethnic Russians among the elites in the Volga-Ural republics were used first for calculation of the possible shares of titular elites also by the postulation that the adjusted common share of titular and Russian elites reflects their adjusted shares as presented for the total population. The ratio for Komi is assessed based on the share of titular elite in regional assembly for a lack of other data. In general, the data for the republics with power-sharing arrangements are more likely available than for those with domination, which could be outcomes of deliberate policies.

## **2. Representation and diversity management**

### ***2.1 Prevalence***

In this part, I will look further for regularities in the data on representation along a number of variables from some economic, cultural and identity structures: the correlation in the shares of the titular and Russian ethnic groups, possible presence of a third group or groups, ethnic cleavages, possible ethnic grievances and conflicts, and ethnic and social stratification. In the last section, I will also hypothesize about the impact of political structures.

First of all, there are no paritarian cases, arguably, because these are possible only under formal arrangements. Further, it proved to be practically impossible also under power-sharing to secure an equal and proportional representation of the ethnic groups (Turovsky, 2010: 34-35). Hence, one group always prevailed whatever the approach, as reflected in Table 3. ‘Prevalence’ of one side is not a separate approach but an overarching feature of all approaches.

An ethnic background of the head of the republic proved to be a good predictor of which ethnic segment of elite has an upper hand in a republic. The institutional design based on super-presidentialism resulted in the prevalence of the strongest group. A super-presidential form of government in Russia proliferated also in the regions (Zamyatin, 2016: 44). The head of

republic is typically the strongest and often the only first-order political actor (Turovsky, 2010: 33). Even if the post of the speaker of regional legislature or of the head of government typically receives a representative of the second strongest group, these positions are much weaker than that of the head of republic, and the elites often express their dissatisfaction with a lesser post.

In the post-Soviet period, the tendency was the substitution of the heads of republics of the titular nationality with those of Russian origin. Up to the mid-1990s, the heads of all republics were of the titular nationality except three (Buryatia, Komi and Mordovia). In the following years, the heads of republics continue to be of the titular nationality in the republics with the leading role of titular elites. Similarly, the heads are of the non-titular nationality in the republics with the leading role of the Russian elite and the Russian majority. By summer 2015, the heads of Mari El, Mordovia, Altay and Khakassia were ethnic Russians, the head of Buryatia was an ethnic Udmurt, the heads of Komi and Udmurtia were of a mixed origin, and the head of Karelia was of an Ingrian Finnish origin.

The correlation of the ethnicity of a head of republic with the prevalence of the corresponding elite segment is an interesting empirical finding that contributes to the argument about the relevance of ethnicity. Of course, there are too many variables behind appointing an individual to this position, and no unidimensional relation can be established.

As the cleavage structure theory predicts, complementary ethno-religious cleavages correlated with the patterns of prevalence of one group over the other(s) in the republics. The religious cleavage was present in case of the republics with Muslim titular groups. The most contrasting example is the Volga-Ural republics, among which three were in control of their Muslim titular groups and in three Finno-Ugric republics power was controlled by the regional Russian elites.

Geographical location of the republics partly corresponds with the prevalence of the titular or Russian elites and reinforces the pattern of ethno-religious cleavages with the concentration of diversity in certain areas. The Russian elites dominate in the Finno-Ugric republics of the Volga-Ural Region and the European North, titular elites dominated in most republics of the North Caucasus, the regional Russian elites were included in the ruling groups of the Turkic republics of the Volga-Ural Region, while the republic of Siberia and the Far East have a mixed record.

Types of ethnic and social stratification are measured on the scale between segmentation and social cohesion along such parameters as the correlation between social status, ethnicity,



faith, language and inter-ethnic marriage. Socio-economic inequalities reinforce ethnic cleavages. Among the parameters, I took the level of urbanization as an indicator of ethnic and social stratification. Overlapping ethnic differentiation and social stratification between urban and rural dwellers was characteristic of the republics with titular groups concentrated in rural areas, as in the Finno-Ugric republics. Cross-cutting social and ethnic cleavages were in place in the republics with significant presence of titular groups also in urban areas, in particular, in the capital city, as in the Volga Turkic republics. The prevalence of elites correlated with the level of urbanization of respective groups.

The titular elites kept the leading role among the elites in the Muslim republics even being in the numerical minority. Indicating the significance of religion, McGarry notes that ethno-religious minorities are less likely to be the object of an assimilationist policy than ethnolinguistic minorities (McGarry, 2010: 39-40). However, Russia's regular ('non-ethnic') regions subjected to assimilationist policies all groups. For example, Golosov has demonstrated that in such regions the Muslim minority groups were typically side-lined from regional power coalitions (Golosov, 2012).

## ***2.2 Domination***

The ethnic composition of population influenced in such a way that the elite of the group in the numerical majority was likely to dictate the rules of consolidation. At the same time, even if the elite of the largest group tended to be overrepresented among the ruling groups in most republics, the regimes ended up having different approaches.

The republics with populations that had one ethnic group in the firm numerical majority tended to produce an ethnic domination. John McGarry defines domination as 'a hierarchy of privilege in a political system, where one group can exert power over another, stamping its culture and authority on the collective life of the state' (McGarry, 2010: 36). Depending on whether the goal of domination is the preservation of ethnic divisions or their elimination, either the strategies of control or assimilation are pursued.

It is meaningful to distinguish between absolute domination and domination relative to other groups. Exclusion has not been found even in the five republics where the share of the largest groups and their elites is more than 75%. The titular elites in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Tuva, but also the Russian elites in Khakassia and Karelia (and the autonomous districts), are dominant already due to the fact that the titular groups make up an absolute majority of more

than 82% in the total populations. Despite this, the other groups are typically included and ethnic Russians also significantly overrepresented mainly at the expense of other minority groups.

For example, the Russian elites enjoyed a much higher rate of representation due to positive discrimination in Chechnya and Ingushetia with their nearly monoethnic populations. Ingushetia introduced an official quota for three ethnic Russian deputies in the regional assembly, although in reality there is only one (Kosikov, 2012: 175-176, 282). The willingness of authorities to promote ethnic Russians might be attributed, among other things, to the marginal character of such representation that does not challenge in any way the domination of the titular nations and rather serves symbolic purposes and prevents accusations of discrimination. Ethnic Russians in Tuva are included in the ruling group by the number that is higher by half than their population share, perhaps not least due to their higher education rates. This gives ground to assess the case as staying at the margin with inclusion. Nevertheless, ethnic Tuvinsians still make up three fourths of the ruling group and clearly dominate in the republic. The opposite is true for Karelia and Khakassia, where the shares of titular parliamentarians in regional assemblies are higher than in the population, but still marginal. The case of Crimea annexed in 2014 is not discussed in this paper, but it would also fall into this category, with the difference that far less Crimean Tatars seem to be represented in the ruling group than their share in the population of 12%.

It is the domination in relation to other groups that usually draws attention due to significant overrepresentation of one group. In three other cases of domination, by the titular elite in North Ossetia as well as by the regional Russian elites in Udmurtia and Mari El, the relation of sizes of the largest groups varies from more than three times in North Ossetia, more than two times in Udmurtia and to a minimal difference in Mari El. Neither has significant third groups nor significant religious divides. In fact, common religion enhances social cohesion not only drawing together Ossetians and Russians, who are Orthodox groups among many Muslim groups of the North Caucasus, but also contributes to the domination of the Ossetians in the republic. A cross-cutting social cleavage that contributes to overrepresentation of Ossetians is their high level of urbanization. Ossetians outnumber Russians three to one in the republic, which is close to absolute domination, and the shares of the groups among inhabitants of the capital city roughly reflects their shares in the population.

There is no disaggregated data across the whole matrix of the republics separately on the legislature and the administration. However, some conclusions could be made on the basis of

the available data for some republics. An analysis of representation across the authority branches provides a key for understanding why Udmurtia and Mari El ended up in domination, how its mechanisms differ and whether any regularities can be noticed. If in the early 1990s the share of deputies of the titular nationality was nearly proportional or sometimes overrepresented, then by the early 2000s it has dramatically decreased to a level significantly below proportional. The parliamentary representation became somewhat more balanced after 2010, apparently as an indirect effect of the state-wide centralization policy.

In the republics where the level of ethnic mobilization in the early 1990s was rather low titular elites were often forced to seek a compromise with the Russian elites (for details, see Zamyatin, 2015: 383-384). As a result of consensual culture, the share of titular elites among government officials has decreased somewhat less from its peak at the time of sovereignization. For example, despite the domination of the Russian elite, the regime in Udmurtia continues to practise co-optation of titular elite, which is a feature of inclusion. Having low chances of becoming a significant political force itself, the titular elite chose the strategy of co-operation with different other elite segments. Accordingly, whatever political actor dominates, the titular elite retains access to some minister portfolios. The higher representation in administration than in parliament is also less discernible due to the group's lower share in this republic in comparison with the two others.

A situation of nearly equally sized groups produced a conflict in Mari El because of the opposite dynamics. The titular elite perceived itself sufficiently strong to present as a separate political source and entered into a confrontation for power. A long period during the 1990s of power-sharing ended after their loss in 2000. Since the 2000s, a drastic decrease in the share of the titular elite turned into the domination of the Russian elite. The titular representation in parliament dropped from about a half in 1995 down to 28% in 2009-2014 and further to about 21% since, or twice less than the group's popular share. Most outstandingly, only one to three ministers of the titular nationality used to be in government. Thus, one element of domination is symbolic inclusion as co-optation for the purpose of control of collaborating segments of ethnic elites (Zamyatin, 2015: 383-384).

The domination is concentrated in executive authorities. This executive underrepresentation is often not immediately evident due to a counterbalancing weight of the share of municipal elites in the aggregated data. In the republics with the titular minority conjoined with vertical ethnic stratification, the share of titular elites among municipal elites is usually higher than among the ruling groups in general, which the available data witnesses, for

example, for Mari El (Zamyatin, 2015: 360-362) and can be attributed to their majority in rural areas. However, as noted above, municipalities are built in the 'vertical of power' and municipal overrepresentation does not compensate for executive underrepresentation.

One possible explanation for the different patterns of parliamentary and administrative representation might lie in the fashion of their formation. Significant efforts and resources that are accessible primarily to the dominant groups were needed to ensure public support for candidates to regional assemblies. At the same time, ethnic pressure groups were able to negotiate and bargain among other segments of the regional elites that translated into governmental posts also for non-dominant groups.

While the analysis of representation across power branches provided some insight on the patterns of overrepresentation amounting to domination, the diversity of these cases means that neither the relation of sizes nor presence of third groups played a decisive role in republics. The relation of sizes might still have played its role in that the overrepresentation of the dominant group is more extended in the situation when comparable shares of the groups tend to increase grievances among their elites, as in Mari El. Further, overlapping ethnic differentiation and social inequality resulted in the Russian regional domination in Udmurtia and Mari El. Representation in executive authorities that are directly controlled by the head of republic is more flexible and, thus, illustrious of the regime. Furthermore, disproportion tends to multiply at the lower stories of the government due to the practice that new ministers tend to come with their team based, *inter alia*, on ethnic networks which is one of the principles for forming clienteles.

### ***2.3 Inclusion***

While the absence of the republics practising exclusion was a rather expected outcome, a relatively small number of republics with inclusion is an outcome that deserves attention. This should not be the result of a random scale of intervals in the model: if we shift the agreed margin between the modes of power-sharing and inclusion from 25% to 20%, the redistribution of republics in boxes will requalify only two cases, Karachay-Cherkessia and Buryatia. A shift of the margin between inclusion and domination from 50% to 55% will again requalify only two cases, North Ossetia and Mari El.

The distinction between descriptive and substantial representation is helpful for analysis of the 'weak' forms of inclusion on its margin with regional Russian domination. As the core

of the linguistic and cultural demands of titular elites is support for their language and culture, minority elites are usually given portfolios of the ministers of culture and education, which resembles 'cultural self-government' as an element of power-sharing (O'Leary, 2008: 54-55). Thus, one indicator of substantial representation is the institutionalization in law of some additional modes of language teaching in the school curriculum, such as compulsory study of titular language for all students, as in Komi, or native language of instruction, as in Mordovia, which are not enforced, for example, in Udmurtia or Mari El. This indicator is not relevant for the regional Russian populations in the numerical minority because the educational framework is the same for the whole country and, at least in theory, they are provided with full access to public services in Russian.

On the margin with titular domination are the cases of Chuvashia and Tatarstan. The titular group is larger by more than in two times in Chuvashia and by less than one third in Tatarstan. In Chuvashia, the titular group and Russians are Orthodox. In 1998, 67% of parliamentarians were Chuvash, 23% were Russians and 7% were Tatars (Shabunin, 2003). In 2011, 74% parliamentarians were Chuvashes, 23% were Russians and 2% were Tatars; in 2015, 19 members of government were Chuvash and two were ethnic Russians (my calculation).

A decades-long relative domination of the titular group in Tatarstan should be attributed to a legacy of sovereignization that produced an exceptional political status of Tatarstan and special relations with the centre. Further, the co-existence of Islam and Orthodoxy reinforces the religious cleavage between the Tatars and the Russians. In 1999, 75% of the parliamentarians were ethnic Tatars down to 66% ten years later (Drobizheva, 2003; Tishkov and Stepanov 2013b). Salagaev and Sergeev (2013) reported that still in 2010-2012 there were only two ethnic Russians among twenty-nine government members. However, in the following years the number of ethnic Russian government members in the republic doubled (after the 2015 elections, it increased to seven). Therefore, since the change in leadership in 2010, the representation of ethnic Russians in Tatarstan increased both in the parliament and the government, although it is still below the proportional level. Their noticeable under-representation qualifies the case of Tatarstan as that of inclusion.

To be sure, the ethnic composition with the majority of a group in the total population does not always determine also the prevalence of its elite. Adygea and Bashkortostan, which qualify as cases of inclusion, are the republics where the titular elites preserved the leading role in the ruling group coupled with the Russian plurality in the population. These republics were among those that established titular domination due to a high level of popular ethnic

mobilization. The overrepresentation was somewhat ambiguously called ‘ethnization’ of the political elites (Galliamov, 2006), as if the dominating elites, be it by titular or Russian elites, were not ‘ethnicized’ by default.

In Bashkortostan, the titular group comprised less than a third of the total population, but for a long time dominated in the ruling group. In 1999 about 49% of parliamentarians (43.7% in the lower chamber and 55% in the upper chamber) and 60% of government members were of the titular nationality, while, accordingly, 23% and 14% were ethnic Russians (Galliamov, 2006). Since 2008, the number of the titular parliamentarians decreased to 45%, while the number of Russians increased to 32% and Tatars to 27% (Tishkov and Stepanov, 2013b: 40). In 2015, according to my analysis, among thirty-eight government members, twenty-one were Bashkirs and twelve were Russians. By nearly proportional ethnic Russian representation, the titular elite was still overrepresented at the expense of the Tatars and other groups. Thus, Bashkortostan’s elite structure is characterized by inclusion of the ethnic Russians and domination over the Tatar-speaking community. Thus, approaches towards different groups could vary within the same republic, whereas the third non-titular groups were often under domination.

How was ethnic domination still possible, if the group in the numerical majority could just outvote the dominant group? Grigorii Golosov’s observation about the case of Adygea is interesting for revealing the role of party politics as an electoral mechanism of domination. According to him, titular elites were overrepresented in the party lists not only of *United Russia* but also of the other parties, for example, in the 2006 elections (Golosov, 2012: 101, 104). Minority candidates were typically included both in party electoral lists and in rural minority-majority single-mandate districts (Zamyatin, 2015).

Golosov attributes such tactics of the inclusion of candidates of different ethnic identities to the strategy of non-politicization of ethnic cleavages, when the dominant elite prevents raising ethnic issues on the political agenda. The opposite strategy of politicization of ethnic cleavages could also be observed, even if usually ineffective. ‘Congresses of the (titular) peoples’, ethnic Russian nationalist organizations and other organizations of non-dominant elites sought to raise ethnic issues. For example, the Union of Slavs of Adygea entered into conflict with the republic’s authorities (Golosov, 2012: 101). The strategy of politicization of ethnicity and accompanying conflicts were also typical in the case of third titular groups, such as Circassians, Balkars, Tatars in Bashkortostan or, among less known cases, Erzya in Mordovia.

Proportional systems are said to ensure some representation of dispersed minority groups, but these are single-mandate districts that favour better representation of territorially concentrated minorities, especially those in ethnic regions (Moser, 2013). Contrary to this logic, proportional representation under the conditions of ‘electoral authoritarianism’ ensured a higher level of titular representation, because it was easier in a centralized manner to include titular candidates in party lists.

Therefore, when the titular elite was sufficiently consolidated to exclude other centres of influence by controlling political institutions and the major parties, it for a long period succeeded in keeping the domination. In this context, inclusion in the republics discussed in this section was not so much a strategic choice as an inability to maintain domination in the conflictual situation due to the demographic factor under intensified pressure from the centre since the early 2010s.

#### ***2.4 Power-sharing***

Alternatively, especially in the situation when ethnic groups were more or less equal in size, practices amounted to regional power-sharing (Zamyatin, 2015). According to Lijphart, power-sharing is possible when all major segments of society enjoy a proportional level of representation or at least a share of power. Lijphart lists some conditions for stability of the political regime based on power-sharing. In order for power-sharing to last, communities should enjoy segmental autonomy and their elites should realize the necessity of cooperation. At the same time, if there are only two major segments in a society, a dual balance of power is unstable, because it carries a danger of political polarization and inhibits cooperation of elites and their participation in a grand coalition (Lijphart, 1977: 55-61).

Lijphart distinguished mass and elite political cultures. Elite political cultures are coalitional or contradictory. It is the ability of political elites to co-operate and make coalitions that is crucial for the success of power-sharing. Grigorii Golosov finds Lijphart’s distinction between coalitional or contradictory political cultures still useful for studying minority representation in the Russian regions. He found that, even after the regions established an authoritarian rule, their ethnic policies can be still either inclusive or exclusive (Golosov, 2014). The findings of this study support and provide new evidence for Golosov’s conclusion.

Indeed, the data demonstrate that the presence of a sizable third group, which comprised a second titular group larger than 10%, or several groups, had a facilitating effect for power-

sharing solutions. Among the republics with a significant third group, Karachay-Cherkessia and Kabardin-Balkaria have two titular groups. In Karachay-Cherkessia, following the informal practice, a Karachay holds the presidential post, a Circassian the post of the government head and ethnic Russians those of the vice-president and the chairman of legislature. The same practice was followed in Kabardin-Balkaria and Dagestan (Tishkov and Stepanov, 2013a: 45, 53, 90-91). Dagestan is exceptional for its tradition of power shared among the 'peoples of the republic', which means the nearly proportional level of representation of the four largest groups, Avar, Dargin, Kumyk and Lezgin. The numerous demographically smaller groups tend to be somewhat underrepresented, while smaller groups are much less represented.

Dagestan, Karachay-Cherkessia and Kabardin-Balkaria make the core of the group of republics with power-sharing. A common feature of the political situation in these republics that contributes to the drive for power-sharing along ethnic lines is the presence of ethnic conflicts, that is, of those conflicts that have not taken shape of institutional or intra-elite confrontation and where conflict sides are categorized in terms of ethnic groups.

In addition, the data on representation in Sakha (Yakutia) also matches the indicators of power-sharing, but in this republic the situation evolved from that of titular domination. The share of the Yakuts dropped from its peak of 73.1% in parliament and 70% in government in the late 1990s to, accordingly, 57.4% and 58.3% (Drobizheva, 2003; Ochirova, 2011: 141). Nowadays the Yakuts compose more than half of the republic's population due to outflow of non-titular groups from the North. There is no single significant third group, but there are several small numbered indigenous peoples that are politically underrepresented.

Mari El and Mordovia also have split titular groups, but the cleavages are not that deep. The leadership co-opts less powerful groups. Lijphart's scheme helps to explain why power-sharing proved unstable in such cases, as Mari El, where more or less equally sized groups entered a competition race and neither the small Hill Mari nor Tatar community provided a stabilizing effect. It seems the presence of non-titular groups under 10%, as the Tatar communities in the neighbouring Finno-Ugric republics, had no noticeable impact. At the same time, underrepresentation of the Tatar community with the magnitude of 25% in Bashkortostan provoked a conflict. Sometimes the third group sided with the titular and sometimes with the Russian counterparts.

In some cases of power-sharing, in Altay, Mordovia, Komi, titular elites were only 'minority shareholders', which places these republics on the margin with inclusion. In these



republics, titular representation in regional assemblies, even if sometimes nearly proportional, was low due to the demographic distribution of groups. Titular elites were, nevertheless, included among the ruling group in the executive branch of power. The terms of this executive power-sharing with regard to its ethnic aspects depended on many factors. Success of titular elites depended on their ability to co-operate with other segments of elites. Most of their demands for the establishment of ethnic institutions were not included in the elite pact. The Russian elites were unwilling to grant ethnic institutions, which could be used instrumentally by titular elites to take hold of power and engage in further ethnic mobilization. However, the Russian elites had to make in the process of regime consolidation at least some concessions to titular elites. These were framed not as institutions but as practices often connected to symbolic recognition.

Finally, Kalmykia and Buryatia are the republics with the Buddhist titular groups. The titular group in Kalmykia is in the majority, outnumbering ethnic Russians in the republic by almost two times and making a proportional share among urban dwellers in the capital city. The case of Buryatia is at the margin of power-sharing, where the titular group was significantly overrepresented. Titular elite used to have the leading role in the republic, although its overrepresentation rather reflected a higher share of Buryats among municipal elites. In absolute terms, the two largest groups are represented nearly equally in parliament. However, in 2007 the Kremlin directly interfered and insisted on the appointment of an ‘outsider’, an ethnic Udmurt, to the post of the head of the republic, which was previously occupied by an ethnic Buryat. The appointee included many ethnic Russians in the government, which shifted the balance towards prevalence of the regional Russian elite.

### ***2.5 Political regime types***

Variation in economic, cultural and identity structures to some extent explains the representation patterns, but these are mediated through political structures. In this section, I will invoke another set of variables revealing the impact of regional political regimes, which Rostislav Turovsky defined as ‘interrelated constellations of political actors and institutions existing in a specific territory’. He suggested focusing in exploration of regional political regimes on the dichotomies of ‘autonomy-dependence’, ‘democracy-authoritarianism’, ‘monocentric-polycentric’ and ‘consolidation-competition’ (Turovsky, 2010: 19-20). I will

pinpoint the correlation of these parameters with the patterns of ethnic representation, leaving testing these conjectures for a further study.

A higher level of autonomy from the centre does not correlate with ethnic representation, because the latter was an outcome of regional developments and not of centre-periphery relations. The re-establishment of the 'power vertical' resulted in significant undermining of self-governance of all republics. Nevertheless, some politically or economically strong republics, for example Tatarstan and Chechnya, continue to enjoy *de facto* a stronger standing vis-a-vis the Kremlin that was expressing itself, inter alia, in continued practices of clientelism. Since 2010, the Kremlin's interference in some republics directed at increase of their dependence sometimes also signified the end of titular domination.

Scholars sometimes argued that ethnic republics with the dominant titular elites are usually more authoritarian than 'non-ethnic' regions (Turovsky, 2010: 22). However, the studies that take the number of effectively represented political parties as an indicator, by the absence of ethnic parties and dispersion of ethnic candidates among the parties, cannot stand for the interplay between ethnicity and democracy. Results of complex studies that take into account several indicators do not provide evidence for any significant correlation between the regional democracy rating and ethnic representation (Petrov and Titkov, 2013).

Monocentrist or polycentrist regimes are defined by the separation of powers between branches of authorities. While the principle of power separation was undermined in all regions, its extent varied. In a monocentric regime, the dominant actor typically presides over a hierarchical structure. The hierarchy did not correlate with the patterns of ethnic representation in legislative and executive authorities as well as municipalities across the republics.

The institutionalized conflicts between the ruling group and opposition, or between branches of power are more visible to the public than intra-elite conflicts. Yet, it is competition between the elite segments that characterizes the actual decision-making process. The number of the centres of political influence determined the level of political competition. The scenarios of the regime consolidation depended on consensual and conflictual regime types (Goloso, 2014), whether the dominant actor tolerated existence of other power centres or attempted to eradicate them. Imposing consolidation, the dominant actor typically took into account the ethnic dimension and provided non-dominant elites with a share of the republican pie. Those ruling groups, who achieved domination through the conflict, had no incentive in sharing power

with the defeated elite segments. Regional power-sharing and ethnic domination as the political outcomes seem to have correlated with consensual and conflictual types of regimes.

## **Conclusion**

Some scholars have pointed out the unexpectedly underwhelming role of ethnicity in post-Soviet Russian politics (Gorenburg and Giuliano, 2012). The findings of this study point at ethnic representation as a relevant practice for the formation of the republics' officialdoms under the authoritarian regime, which is hard to detect from the institutionalist approach. The regional arrangements remain the key solutions to the challenge of diversity also after the demise of federalism.

What were the patterns of representation? In the early 1990s, the Soviet legacy of ethnically balanced appointments sustained a degree of power-sharing (Zamyatin, 2015: 355-357). Russia ended up in an institutional design that established super-presidentialism. Notably, it seems to be an outcome of the similar institutional design in regions that the ethnic background of the head of the republic always correlated with prevalence. The institutional design determined scenarios of regime consolidation under authoritarian tendencies. With the stabilization of political institutions in the mid-1990s, the dominant elite segment in the republics with one group larger than other(s), titular or Russian, tended to become overrepresented among the ruling group. The regime consolidation often signified the domination and marginalization of counter-elites or at least a common prevalence of one ethnic group in the republic's leadership.

Alternatively, especially if ethnic groups were more or less equal in size and power, it was impossible to win with the help of ethnic mobilization of one group. In that case, imposed consolidation typically included co-optation of counter-elite. As a compromise, the major groups were likely to be provided a share of power or, at least, included in power coalitions. Therefore, it is remarkable that the consensual or conflictual regime types seem to have relied on the approaches either of domination of the titular or Russian elites or of power-sharing between larger ethnic segments of regional elites in most republics. The establishment of regional varieties of an authoritarian regime have not principally brought change in the two scenarios.

Why might these patterns have emerged? In line with the institutionalist account, the elites were largely restricted by structural factors such as the ethnic structure of the republics.

While demography on its own was not a good predictor, it had significance in correlation with other variables. Absolute domination became a default setting due to demographic factors. Relative domination of titular groups was established in the conditions of their numerical majority in the population in correlation with their proportional or higher share among the urban dwellers. At that, the presence of the religious cleavage in the republics titled after the Muslim groups typically signified deeper ethnic divides and a lower level of intercommunal trust and inspired the ‘winner-takes-all’ strategy. Titular domination over the republic’s leadership, with some exceptions, was maintained well into the 2010s. Regional Russian domination in relation to titular groups was sustained under the cross-cutting ethnic-religious and social cleavages in the case of significant Russian majority among urban dwellers. The presence of a third group and ethnic conflict situations involving more than two titular groups contributed to power-sharing especially in the three most diverse republics of the North Caucasus.

With the curtailment of regional self-governance, it became more difficult to sustain regional power-sharing, because the conditions for consensual decision-making were undermined. Some republics drifted through conflict in the direction of domination usually of the regional Russian elites as, for example, in Mari El. So far, the Kremlin supported regional Russian domination in some republics and tolerated power-sharing arrangements in some other republics, expecting the regional elites to deliver votes and provide for political stability. At the same time, the change of republic’s chief officials under the Kremlin’s pressure invoked the shift from titular domination to inclusion of the regional Russian elites in a few cases, notably in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. In general, the mixed approach to diversity management within the formally retained federal framework provided flexible tools that the leadership employed depending on the situation in republics.

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